[Shri A. J. John]

The importance of experiments and research in the scheme for improvement of agriculture cannot be over-emphasised. The budget for the next year contains provision for research on tapioca and sweet potato, mango and pineapple, bunchy top disease of bananas, arecanut, cashewnut, pepper and cardamom. Demonstrations in ryots' land, expansion of cocoanut nurseries, improvement of paddy, biological control of cocoanut pest, purchase and distribution of green manure seeds and control of the leaf and root disease of the arecanut are among the schemes which will be undertaken by the Agricultural Department in the next year.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.

18. The State has a large, but degenerated cattle population. The Key Village Scheme which aims at improving the breed and productive capacity of the cattle has already been introduced in six centres in the State. Bulls of inferior varieties in selected centres are castrated and breeding with pedigree bulls is carried on. The technique of artificial insemination is also applied in these centres free of charge. More institutions of this type will be started next year. There is already a net work of veterinary hospitals and dispensaries and more dispensaries and hospitals are proposed to be opened during the Second Five Year Plan period. The department also runs Livestock Farms, Poultry Farms, Dry Stock Farms and Duck Farms on modern lines. The Type Scheme for cross breeding, opening of new centres under the All-India Poultry Development Scheme, improvement of the Livestock-cum-Dairy Farms, opening of dry stock farm at Quilon, establishment of Gosadans and Gosalas, and the starting of artificial insemination centres and fodder farms are only a few among the various schemes for which funds have been provided in the next year's budget of the Animal Husbandry Department.

To overcome the dearth of qualified Veterinarians, a Veterinary College has been started at Ollukkara, where there are ample facilities for the expansion of the institution. The College is started with the assistance of the Central Government. There are at present 70 students for the B. V. Sc. Degree course which runs for a period of four years. It is hoped that from next year onwards 80 students can be admitted.

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